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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 002151

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCOR](#) [KCRM](#) [MARR](#) [XL](#) [JM](#)
SUBJECT: JAMAICA: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH MINISTER OF
NATIONAL SECURITY PETER PHILLIPS

REF: KINGSTON 2100

Classified By: Ambassador Brenda L. Johnson, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

This is an action request: please see para 3.

Summary

¶1. (SBU) Ambassador Johnson and Minister of National Security, Peter Phillips, met October 30 to discuss a range of common concerns. Minister Phillips noted that the October 26 meeting with DHS Secretary Chertoff in Port of Spain, Trinidad, had been a positive one, if somewhat shorter than CARICOM Ministers might have preferred. He welcomed this opportunity for follow-up from the Chertoff meeting, and requested a copy of the US-CARICOM Initiative to Combat Illicit Trafficking in Arms, so that he could push CARICOM to review and discuss the agreement. Regarding criminal deportees, Phillips expressed the need to "start a dialogue" on the issue, noting that transnational crime is on the rise worldwide, and that therefore simple deportation is no longer an end in itself. Minister Phillips strongly agreed with the Ambassador on the need to bolster anti-corruption efforts within the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), and also expressed strong support for Post's Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS)-assisted Airport Interdiction Task Force at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston.

¶2. (SBU) Turning his attention to the upcoming Cricket World Cup, Phillips assured the Ambassador that Jamaica would take all necessary steps to complete the Operational Protocols required for implementation of the Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS). He noted, however, that there was still a "critical gap" in the region's maritime security planning. Ambassador Johnson used this opportunity to segue the discussion to a consideration of Jamaica's entering into a formal Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with the U.S. (reftel). Phillips agreed to give the matter priority attention. End summary.

Participants

GOJ participants: Minister Peter Phillips, Permanent
Secretary Gilbert Scott, Jamaica Defense Force Lt. Col.

SIPDIS
Anderson.

USG Participants: Ambassador Johnson, NAS Andrea Lewis, ECON
John Morgan, FO Ixta Gonzalez.

Light Arms Trafficking

13. (SBU) At a meeting on October 30, Minister of National Security Peter Phillips informed the Ambassador that CARICOM's Security Ministers had not seen the agreement on trafficking in arms mentioned by Secretary Chertoff at their October 26 meeting, and that if the USG provided a copy of the document, he would encourage his colleagues to review and discuss it on an expedited schedule. He conceded that the confusion likely stems from a mix-up within the CARICOM Implementation Agency on Crime and Security (IMPACS): the new group has been so focused on preparations for the upcoming Cricket World Cup that the document may have been "lost in the shuffle." Permanent Secretary Gilbert Scott added that it was his impression that Secretary Rice had left the "door open" to move forward bilaterally on this issue before a regional agreement was signed. Minister Phillips seemed eager to explore a bilateral MOU with the USG if CARICOM continues to stall. Post requests clarification as to whether a bilateral agreement would be acceptable to the USG.

Criminal Deportees

14. (SBU) Regarding the issue of criminal deportees, Phillips expressed a strong desire to "start a dialogue" on the issue. He hypothesized that Secretary Chertoff's agenda was "to

seek ways to ensure a faster rate of return," but opined that the growth of transnational crime means that simply deporting someone no longer leads to the disruption of the criminal networks that they have established. The GOJ feels that more can be done to assist with the reintegration and rehabilitation of the deportees, and that this is in the interests of the United States just as much as Jamaica.

15. (SBU) NAS Director pointed out that there has been "tension" over the deportee issue in the past. Phillips, however, dismissed this concern. He preferred to frame the debate as a matter for deepened law enforcement cooperation. He reiterated that he understand the "domestic political realities" in the United States, but nonetheless feels that it is in USG interests to partner on the problem.

16. (SBU) Asked when Jamaica's portion of the CARICOM sponsored study on Criminal Deportees will be publicly released, Phillips stated that it would become public once raised in Parliament. NAS Director asked what the GOJ was doing to prepare for the media reaction. Phillips conceded that the GOJ had not developed a communications strategy. He and Scott agreed on the need to examine this issue more closely, although he provided the caveat that the GOJ "does not control (the) media."

Anti-Corruption Efforts

17. (C) Ambassador Johnson expressed disappointment at the failure of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) to hire a U.S. law enforcement officer as the new Head of the JCF Anti-Corruption Branch, a position created under the December 2005 GOJ Anti-Corruption Strategy. Phillips concurred, saying that his displeasure was "well-known" within the Ministry (Comment: on saying that, Phillips gave a pointed look at Permanent Secretary Scott, whose noticeable absence during the recent selection process allowed the Commissioner of Police, Lucius Thomas, free reign to express his and the

JCF's hostility to having an "outsider" hold the position.
End comment).

¶8. (C) Phillips stated that JCF will re-advertise the position, a commitment he was unwilling to make to the British High Commissioner during their meeting on October 23. He also insisted that prior to posting the position again, the JCF must have settled on clear terms of reference and scope of duties for the officer (Note: In addition to Commissioner Thomas' obvious hostility to an outside candidate, the lack of clear terms of reference was a deciding factor in the U.S. law enforcement officer's decision not to pursue the post. End note).

¶9. (C) As there will be natural friction resulting from an outsider coming into an established organization, the NAS Director requested that the JCF and the Ministry include in the terms of reference clarification of the actual working relationship, within the JCF, for this new position. The head of the JCF Professional Standards Branch, Novelette Grant, who currently has responsibility for "anti-corruption" efforts, has continuously worked behind the scenes to undermine the creation of a new Anti-Corruption Branch outside her control. Phillips conceded that there were elements within the JCF who have "little enthusiasm" for anti-corruption efforts, but affirmed that he and the senior MNS staff were committed to "rooting out corruption," and he welcomed USG assistance in the formulation of terms of reference.

Airport Interdiction Task Force

¶10. (SBU) NAS Director also raised concerns regarding the lack of space allocated by the Airport Authority for the US/UK/Canada/GOJ Airport Interdiction Task Force and other law enforcement groups operating at the airport. Scott noted that he had raised this problem in a meeting with the Airports Authority. Phillips, however, went further, stating (as much, it seemed, to Scott as for our benefit) that this "was not a request," and that the space must be provided. NAS Director mentioned that there will be a working-level

coordination meeting on November 1, that will hopefully result in agreement by the airport authority to provide adequate space, and conveyed the vital importance of staying on the same page on this issue.

Cricket World Cup

¶11. (SBU) Ambassador Johnson noted that the United States was engaged on many levels in preparation for the Cricket World Cup, to be held in the region in March and April 2007. The Ambassador highlighted the recent signing of the APIS agreement with DHS, but cautioned that there was still a great deal of work to be done. Phillips confirmed that a comprehensive communications plan exists for APIS data-sharing from the regional center in Bridgetown. Scott noted that Operational Protocols for the system were just about finalized.

¶12. (SBU) Phillips clarified that the GOJ did not need to pass implementing legislation for APIS; he intends to simply amend existing regulations already promulgated under the Aliens Act of 1946 to order carriers to provide APIS data. Asked for a general timeframe, Phillips said that he hoped that the appropriate legal framework could be in place before Christmas. Econoff re-emphasized the need for rapid progress on these two issues, in particular.

Status of Forces Agreement

¶13. (SBU) Minister Phillips highlighted the need for a

greater "maritime presence") particularly in the Eastern Caribbean) during the Cricket World Cup. He said that while the APIS system would enhance security for air and cruise passengers, there remained a critical gap in CARICOM's ability to monitor private boat traffic.

¶14. (SBU) Econoff reiterated that Secretary Chertoff had taken CARICOM's concerns back to Washington to relay them to the appropriate entities. He noted, however, that the lack of a formal Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with Jamaica made logistics more difficult. Ambassador Johnson pointed out that formal SOFAs had facilitated the dispatch of United States assets to the Pacific after the 2004 tsunami and that if disaster assistance was requested during Cricket World Cup, contingency operations could be more easily and rapidly effected with a SOFA already in place. The Ambassador gave Phillips a draft of the diplomatic notes that were provided to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) on October 23 (reftel). Phillips agreed to give the matter priority attention. He did not think that such an agreement would require Parliamentary approval, but stated that he would respond formally once he had confirmed this.

CODIS database

¶15. (U) NAS Lewis returned to the Permanent Secretary an executed copy of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the GOJ to implement the CODIS DNA-sharing database.

Comment

¶16. (SBU) Now is an ideal time to engage aggressively with Peter Phillips on any areas of mutual benefit. While always an intelligent and useful contact, Phillips has not always "followed through." With the considerable regional resource needs for Cricket World Cup, however, he is more receptive than ever. Pushing for execution of a Status of Forces Agreement, GOJ assistance with CARICOM partners on the Initiative to Combat Illicit trafficking of Arms, cooperation on the thorny deportee issue, and Phillips' support to combat corruption are all more possible now than in the past. It should be remembered, however, that if Phillips "comes through" in some of these areas, he likely will come back to the USG looking for some favors of his own;

most probably, this could involve some form of maritime platform for the Cricket World Cup. End comment.
Johnson